

VZCZCXYZ0002
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHBU #2266/01 3330747
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 290747Z NOV 07
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9791
INFO RHMFISS/CDR USSOCOM MACDILL AFB FL//SCJ2//
RULGPIA/USCOMSOLANT

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 002266

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, I/GWHA, WHA, WHA/PDA, WHA/BSC,
WHA/EPSC
CDR USSOCOM FOR J-2 IAD/LAMA

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; ANNAPOLIS PEACE CONFERENCE; BURMA; UPCOMING
VISIT OF CARL MEACHAM AND SHAWN SULLIVAN TO BUENOS AIRES; 11/28/07

1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Leading international stories today include the outcome of the Middle East peace conference held in Annapolis; Burma and the oil dispute between Beijing and Washington; and the upcoming visit of US experts on Latin American issues.

2. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "For the sake of the Middle East peace"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (11/28) "After seven years of stagnation, the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian National Authority committed yesterday to resuming talks and reaching a definitive peace deal before the end of next year. They did so when inaugurating the US-sponsored Middle East international conference..."

"Even though the tentative agreement reached may not be more than a first step towards Israelis and Palestinians coming to terms, it is one of the most important steps in the arduous road to Middle East peace.

"... The agreement, which only focused on general aspects and did not delve into conflictive issues like the future of refugees or the status of Jerusalem, established a schedule aimed at concluding negotiations before the end of US President George W. Bush's term in office, who promoted the summit.

"While the communiqu  was far from the five-page document expected by the Palestinians, the organization of the international conference alone is an achievement for the Bush administration."

- "Israelis and Palestinians promise to attempt a peace deal by 2008"

Ana Baron, leading "Clarins" Washington-based correspondent, comments (11/28) "Israeli PM Ehud Olmert and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas committed to resuming stalled peace negotiations aimed at creating an independent Palestinian State before the end of 2008. For his part, President George W. Bush promised that he would remain involved in facilitating talks and he announced that the US would be the only judge and mediator in negotiations..."

"Nonetheless, nothing of what was said during the conference was enough to dispel doubts and prevailing skepticism over what may happen from now on.

"While the joint statement read by Bush at the beginning of the conference is a step forward, it does not mention any of the thorny

issues to be taken on by working groups, such as the future of Jerusalem, the luck of Palestinian refugees and political prisoners, the return of Israeli settlements in territories that allegedly belong to the Palestinians, and it does not guarantee either the required political power to move forward towards a deal.

"The strength with which Bush, Abbas and Olmert clasped hands in front of TV cameras yesterday in Annapolis is the other side of the weakness they suffer in their respective countries."

- "A group of US envoys arrives in the region"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," comments (11/28) "The transition between Nestor Kirchner and his wife, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, is not over yet, and some US envoys started to pack in order to travel to Buenos Aires. They want to assess how much the direction of the country could change under the Cristina administration.

"Carl Meacham, the highest-ranking Republican expert on Latin America, is one of the travelers. He told 'La Nacion' that the question is whether there will be any difference from the current administration.'

"Meacham will travel with Shawn Sullivan, director for Latin America at the International Republican Institute...

"Meacham and Sullivan want to 'evaluate the local situation,' particularly in terms of security, energy and infrastructure.

"... Meacham added: 'There is much to do in the bilateral relationship, particularly regarding security, just like the TBA situation. We share concerns over Iran and Argentina's ties to Venezuela."

- "Oil dispute between Beijing and Washington feeds Burma's military dictatorship"

Maximiliano Sbarbi Osuna, international analyst, writes for business-financial "BAE" (11/28) "Reports from Burma frequently explain that both the EU and the US condemn the ferocious de facto regime that is economically and militarily supported by China. While this statement may be true, the conflict in this South East Asian country is much broader and is related to the regional rivalry between Washington and Beijing, and this is the reason why Western oil corporations are a fundamental part of the problem.

"... The question we should pose is why the West is trying to condemn the regime if it benefits from the Burma government. The answer to this is easy - a change of government could represent greater income for major oil corporations operating in the country and it would also reinforce Washington's alliance with India, thereby reducing Chinese influence in the region.

"However, Beijing considers Burma a highly important ally because 80 percent of the oil it receives from the Middle East comes from Burma...

"... The Western interest in Burma can be explained by the increasing ties between the US and India. Last year, Washington and New Delhi signed an important nuclear deal aimed at India balancing the region against China, the other Asian giant."

To see more Buenos Aires reporting, visit our classified website at:
<http://www.state.sqov.gov/p/wha/buenosaires>

WAYNE